The Effects of Employee Disabilities on Managerial Nonverbal Behaviours

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Background

- Despite explicit control in workplace settings, biases exist implicitly[1]
- Nonverbal anxiety is more frequent when outward behaviour is incongruent with implicit bias[2]
- People show behaviours associated with anxiousness when faced with members of marginalized groups[3]
- People with disabilities face discrimination in the workforce[4]
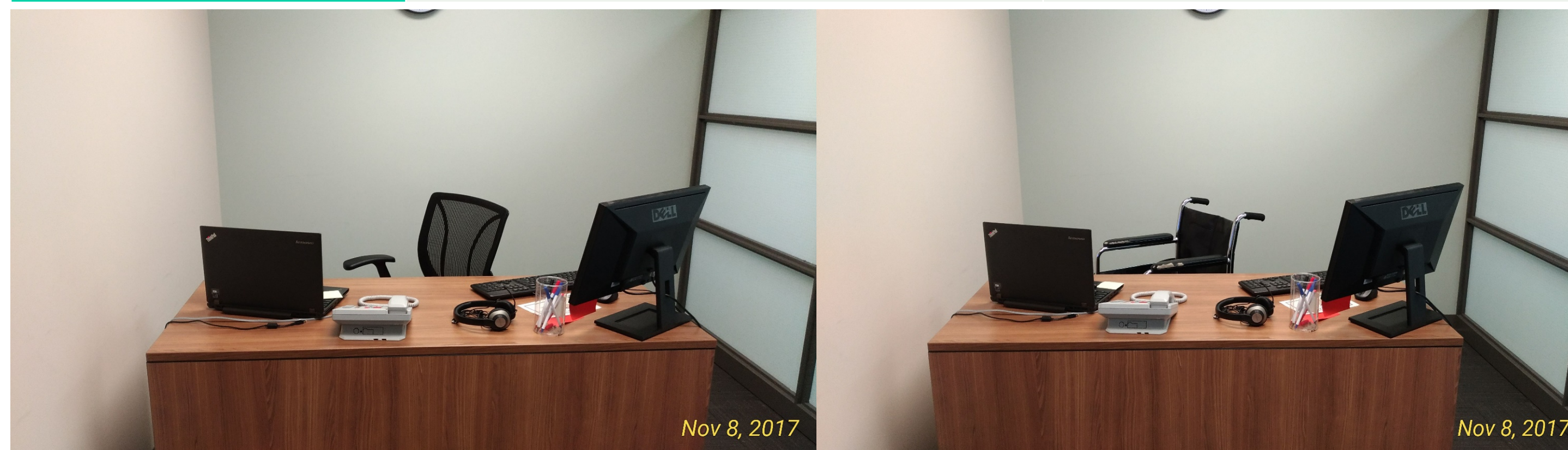
Hypothesis

Participants who provide feedback to a hypothetical employee with a disability will show more anxious behaviours (i.e. more posture shifts, object and self-adaption, and less gesturing) than those in conditions without a disability present
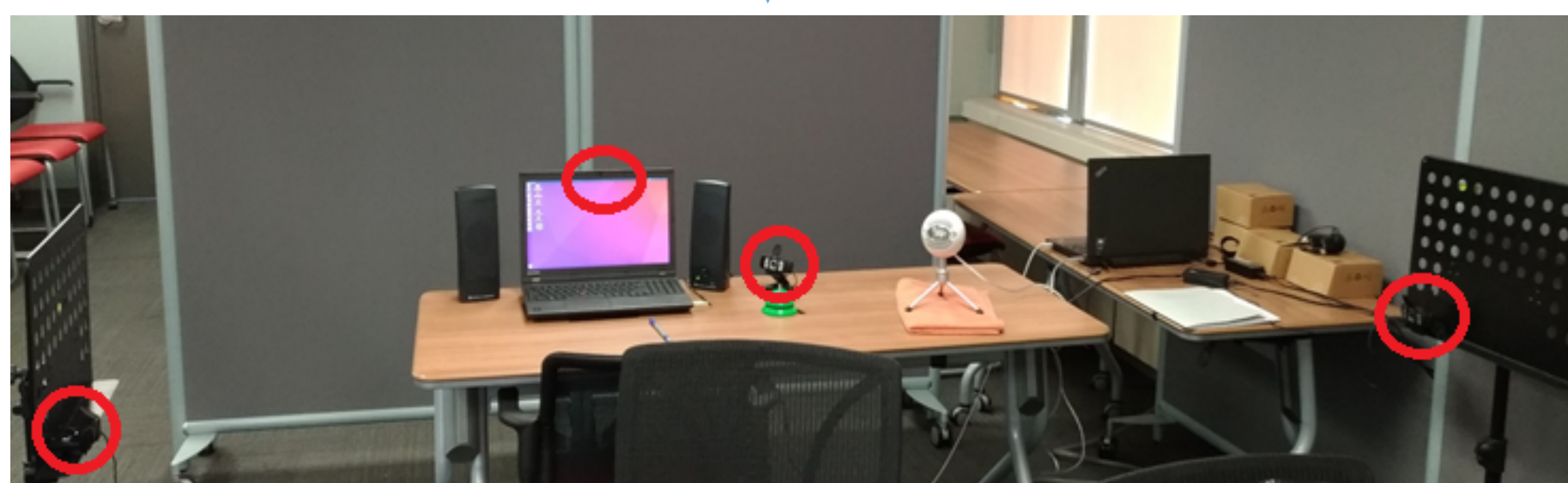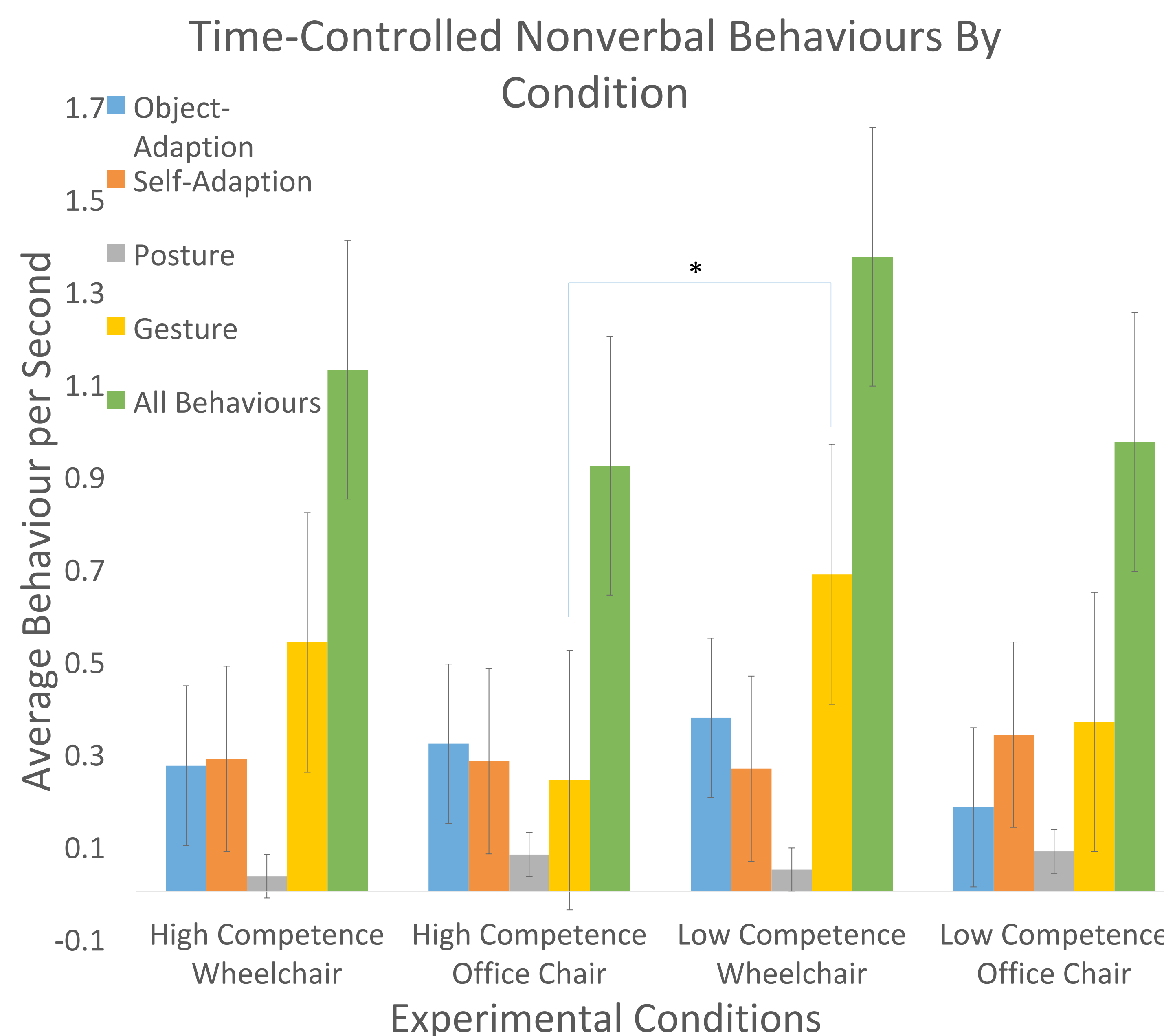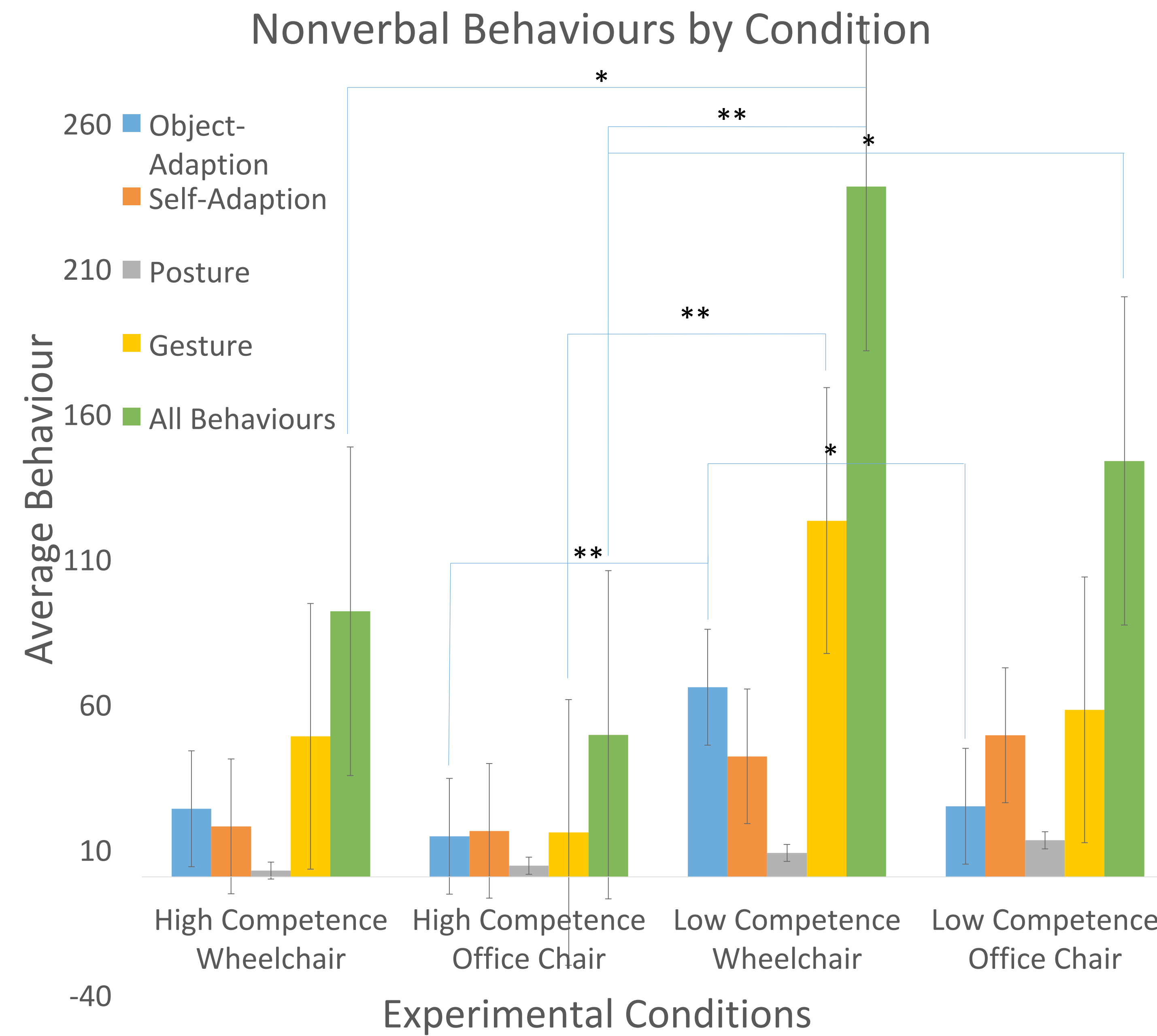
Methods

Manipulations and Design:

	High Competence	Low Competence
Wheelchair	HW (N=5)	LW (N=8)
Office Chair	HO (N=12)	LO (N=12)

1: Watch Video → 2: Provide Video Feedback

Results

Nonverbal Behaviours by Condition

- Object-Adaption
- Self-Adaption
- Posture
- Gesture
- All Behaviours

Y-axis: Average Behaviour
X-axis: Experimental Conditions (High Competence Wheelchair, High Competence Office Chair, Low Competence Wheelchair, Low Competence Office Chair)

Time-Controlled Nonverbal Behaviours By Condition

- Object-Adaption
- Self-Adaption
- Posture
- Gesture
- All Behaviours

Y-axis: Average Behaviour per Second
X-axis: Experimental Conditions (High Competence Wheelchair, High Competence Office Chair, Low Competence Wheelchair, Low Competence Office Chair)

*p<0.05, **p<0.01

Discussion and Limitations

Discussion

- Results are preliminary due to small sample sizes
- Gesturing is significant between high competence office chair and low competence wheelchair
- Contrary to hypothesis, there are more gestures in wheelchair conditions than office chair conditions
- Before controlling for time, object-adaption is more frequent in low competence wheelchair than high competence office chair
- Controlling for time eliminates all significant effects except for gesture
- Length of feedback may modulate significant effects

Limitation

- Student participants have limited managing experience
- The absence of a person's presence may affect the presence of nonverbal anxiety
- Measures focused mainly on kinesic (bodily) behaviours

Future Directions

- Increasing sample size
- Study other behaviours for indicators of anxiety
- Approach coding with a different method
- There is possibility in developing an implicit bias scale for interpersonal behaviours
- Educating and reducing biased behaviours in the workplace through workshops and policy suggestions

References

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